



Alexandria Transportation Commission
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.746.4025

www.alexandriava.gov

Mayor William D. Euille and Members of City Council
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

March 23, 2015

Re: FY 2016-2025 Transportation Budget

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of City Council:

This letter summarizes recommendations of the Transportation Commission on the City's FY 2016-2025 Transportation Budget. The Commission supports much of the Acting City Manager's proposed transportation budget, but believes that changes are required to fund high priorities of the Transportation Commission, including the operating cost of expansion of Capital Bikeshare in the near-term as well as capital and operating costs of DASH expansion over the 10-year horizon of the transportation budget. In addition, any reduction in the City's contribution to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) or cost savings in other transportation programs should be reapplied to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to fund other transportation priorities.

At its March 18, 2015 meeting the Commission held a public hearing regarding the proposed FY2016-2025 transportation budget and unanimously endorsed the following position on the proposed budget.

The Commission commends the Acting City Manager on continuing to place a high priority on the Potomac Yard Metrorail station, the West End Transitway, and Van Dorn Metrorail Station Improvements by funding these projects in the transportation budget. The Commission also appreciates that the proposed budget is consistent with a several recommendations of the Commission documented in its December 2014 correspondence to the Mayor and Council (attached), including:

- Preservation of the 2.2 cent transportation reservation in order to comply with maintenance-of-effort requirements, maintain flexibility, and to offset previous loss of state urban funds.

- Capitalizing staff positions that are directly related to capital project implementation, as allowable, in order to utilize capital funds and reduce impacts on the operating budget.
- Allocating Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) 70% funds for high priority major capital investments with regional impacts, with an emphasis on leveraging non-city funds and/or accelerating project delivery.
- Utilizing funding sources with the least restrictions on project eligibility (i.e. federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP), and NVTA 30% funds) for non-motorized projects, project development, accessibility improvements, maintenance and operations.

However, the Commission requests that Council consider the following changes to the proposed transportation budget:

- In the event that the City's capital or operating contributions to WMATA are lower than currently budgeted, or cost savings on other transportation programs are realized, funds should revert to the TIP to fund other transportation priorities.
- The Commission supports the expansion of Capital Bikeshare as an important element of the City's transportation system, connecting people to transit and enhancing mobility and active transportation in the City. The City has previously committed to expanding Capital Bikeshare in Alexandria through prior-year appropriations towards the capital cost of bicycles and stations. Developer contributions and grants provide all funds to purchase, equip, and install 16 new stations. The operating cost of this program is small, just \$10,000 per station, and the cost recovery factor is 70%. The Commission requests that Council approve a budget that includes full funding for the operating cost of this expansion.
- If WMATA contributions remain as currently budgeted, the City should consider other reductions within the budget to fund operating costs for the sixteen additional Capital Bikeshare stations. If funding is not available for all 16 additional stations, the Commission recommends phased implementation of Capital Bikeshare expansion.
- The expansion of DASH service is a high priority of the Transportation Commission. The City Manager's proposed transportation budget anticipates very limited expansion of DASH service over the next 10 years. DASH is a critical element in moving people efficiently, supporting the City's development plans and promoting economic sustainability. Robust funding for capital and operating costs of DASH expansion is Commission's the second highest priority if additional funding becomes available.
- Additional analysis should be conducted to determine if DASH could operate services currently operated by WMATA at a lower operating cost, especially during the weekend and off-peak periods where no capital investment is required. While the findings of such an analysis will not be completed in time to support this year's budget, any identified savings may be implemented in future budget cycles.
- The Old Cameron Run trail project is a higher priority than the Backlick Run trail project, and the Commission recommends consolidating funding for both projects to support construction of Old Cameron Run Trail. The Backlick Run Trail remains a priority, and should be added back to the City's Transportation Long Range Plan (LRP).

We appreciate your consideration of the Commission's input on proposed FY 2016-2025 budget during this difficult budget year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan M. Macek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nathan" being the most prominent.

Nathan M. Macek
Chair, Alexandria Transportation Commission

Attachment: December 3, 2014 Letter from Transportation Commission to the Mayor and City Council

cc: Alexandria Transportation Commission
Mark Jinks, Acting City Manager
Emily A. Baker, Acting Deputy City Manager
Yon Lambert, Director, T&ES
Nelsie L. Birch, Budget Director, OMB
Sandra Marks, Deputy Director, T&ES
Chris Bever, Assistant Director, OMB

**Alexandria Transportation Commission
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314**

Mayor William D. Euille and Members of City Council
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December 3, 2014

Re: FY 2016-2025 Budget Guidance

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of City Council:

At its November 19, 2014 meeting, the Transportation Commission approved the following guidance to staff for preparation of the FY 2016 budget for inclusion in the City Manager's FY 2016 budget:

- Preserve the 2.2 cent transportation reservation in order to comply with maintenance-of-effort requirements, maintain flexibility, and to offset previous loss of state urban funds.
- Commit adequate operating funds to provide the project management, procurement, management and of staff resources necessary to implement new capital projects and programs. Consider capitalizing staff positions that are directly related to capital project implementation, as allowable, in order to utilize capital funds and reduce impacts on the operating budget.
- Maintain funding for highest priorities set by Transportation Commission.
- Allocate Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) 70% funds for high priority major capital investments with regional impacts, with an emphasis on leveraging non-city funds and/or accelerating project delivery.
- Utilize funding sources with least restrictions on project eligibility (i.e. CMAQ, RSTP, and NVTA 30% funds) for non-motorized projects, project development, ADA improvements, maintenance and operations.
- Pursue discretionary grant funding for transportation projects, including state capital assistance and federal New Starts, Small Starts, and TIGER grants.
- Ensure adequate funding for the Alexandria Police Department to enforce the proper use of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on Route 1 and Washington Street.
- Ensure that city transportation funding levels are maintained or increased above the maintenance-of-effort requirements of HB2313, to provide new transportation capacity and enhanced transportation services and programs while also maintaining existing assets in a state of good repair.
- Recognizing that regional transportation, including WMATA transit service is a priority

ATTACHMENT

that should not fall entirely on the transportation budget but rather a shared cost, the Council should explore opportunities to help fund the regional transit needs beyond the City's transportation resources.

This guidance prioritizes the preservation of the 2.2 cent transportation reservation, and the commitment of adequate operating funds for staff resources as the two highest priorities. It also reflects the additional responsibilities that come along with the regional and state funding available for transportation projects in FY2016 and beyond. The Transportation Commission encourages Council to allocate the resources necessary to ensure that these projects can be implemented on schedule and within budget, and to ensure that the City does not risk losing these funds.

We commend the Council on their ongoing commitment to funding multi-modal, sustainable transportation options in the City. We appreciate your consideration of the Commission's guidance on the proposed FY 2016 budget. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan M. Macek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Nathan M. Macek
Chair, Alexandria Transportation Commission

cc: City Manager Rashad M. Young
Acting Director of Transportation and Environmental Services Yon Lambert
Alexandria Transportation Commission